3: Bowen C-4 (1945-1947) 1951 MK2 Maritime Arabs MK2

136 stinging tentacles that can easily put out an eye. There is also a needle urchin (*Diadema*), first reported from the Persian Gulf in 1949.[9] This urchin has spines more than a foot long, which can cause nasty, slow-healing wounds. However, as the urchin is several feet in diameter, black, and slow-moving, it is more easily avoided than the dawl.

164 752 Pearl divers suffer from a variety of diseases, most of which can be directly traced to their occupation. Open sores and skin ulcers result from encounters with the dawl and scrapes against coral and other sharp objects. Suppuration of the eardrums, rheumatism, and nosebleeds are common. Inflamed eyes are always a sign of the pearl diver. Persian Gulf divers are more susceptible to the "bends" than divers who use suits, since they must surface as rapidly as possible.

262 461 Divers never eat while they are working. When the day's diving is finished, the diver has some rice, dates, and tea, but not much else; sleep is his only energy builder. Every 10 days or so the divers get a rest, and every three weeks or so the dhows put in for food and water unless they have been revictualed at sea.

228 312 502 438 In recent years Ras Tanura has become a center of activity for the pearling fleet off its shores; for the oil company's installations can now pump an abundance of fresh water into the water tanks of the dhows much faster than it can be transferred by waterskins. The larger vessels anchor for the night on the banks; the smaller vessels sometimes take shelter if it is available. Some vessels of the pearling fleet replenish their water supply from the submarine springs that gush into the Persian Gulf in numerous places along the Arabian littoral. Relatively fresh water can be brought up in a waterskin by a diver. One of these springs, marked by a spar buoy, is to be found a few miles north of Jubail.

228 The first duty of the day on a pearling dhow is opening the previous day's oysters, which are heaped on deck in a large pile so that no one knows who found the oyster which may produce the rare gem. The muscles of the oysters relax enough overnight so that it is not difficult to open them. Less than a third of the oysters yield pearls, and these are usually only very small seed pearls.

228 442 439 Pearls are sometimes bought on the pearl banks by brokers who travel around in their own boats trying to get the best pearls before other brokers hear of them, and trying to get a valuable pearl before a nakhoda realizes its value. But whether the pearls are sold on the banks or at Bahrein, they

all find way to Bombay

113 [9] A. H. Clark and R. LeB. Bowen, Jr., Echinoderms of Tarut Bay and Vicinity, Saudi Arabia, *Amer. Museum Novitates*, No. 1390, 1949.

228 all end up in Bombay. The Indians drill, polish, and grade the pearls, and
442 string them on silk; these short strands are known as "Bombay bunches."
439 Before World War II the pearls were sent to India by streamer; today they
509 are usually sent by air from Bahrein, Kuweit, Sharjah, and Dharan. The pearls are usually sold to Indian merchants in these towns, but occasionally the Arabs themselves take the pearls to Bombay.

228 After all the pearls have been sold, the nakhoda figures out the season's
465 profit. The owner of the dhows gets half the profit; the other half is divided among the crew. Most of the pearling dhows out of Saudi Arabian ports are small (not more than 40 feet), with crews of ten -- six divers and four attendants -- in addition to the nakhoda. Each diver and each attendant gets one share in the profits (about 4 per cent); the nakhoda gets two shares, unless he owns the dhow and longboat, in which case, of course, he gets more than half the profit. The number of shares each of the crew, the nakhoda, and the owner get is agreed on at the beginning of the season and may vary from place to place. Many of the pearling dhows out of Kuweit and Bahrein are considerably larger than those out of the Saudi Arabian ports and may have crews of forty or more; on these the nakhoda gets a larger number of shares.

Pearling is a gamble for everyone concerned, from the merchants to the divers. Some seasons are good, some bad; sometimes a boat has bad luck, sometimes excellent luck. A share on a pearling dhow should be worth several hundred rupees, but it may not be worth fifty.

228 Usually a share on a pearling dhow represents a year's wages, since the
426 pearling industry operates under the "debt system" mentioned above (not to be confused with the "truck system" of pearl fisheries elsewhere, in which the divers are paid off in produce). Under the debt system the divers and attendants are given cash advances during the winter season, when they are not working, and their families are given food and supplies while the season is on. The advances are deducted from their calculated shares, so that usually the worker gets little or nothing.

Thus the divers and attendants are perpetually in debt. Once a worker is in debt to a nakhoda, he cannot work for anyone else during the pearling season; this is one of the laws of the industry. He has virtually sold himself into economic slavery to the nakhoda, who has his services and never actually has to pay him anything, whereas he in effect pays the nakhoda in the pearls he produces. However, it should be remembered that the nakhoda is in turn usually in debt to some merchant, who commonly finances numerous nakhodas.